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EMEN

European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network



Deliverable 2.4

**Working paper with good practices & innovation on
coaching and mentoring for migrants**

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Table of content

1. Introduction.....	5
1.1 The fourth working paper of our Community of Practice “Coaching and Mentoring”	5
1.2 The rationale of comparing support schemes for Migrant Entrepreneurs.....	5
2. A lean analytical lens for comparing	6
2.1 Knowledge transfer	6
2.2. Support methodology	7
2.3 business / financing model.....	8
2.4 Embeddedness in the local ecosystem	9
3. Good Practices for Refugee Start Up Support.....	10
3.1 Start-Up Refugees - Finland.....	10
3.2 The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network (TERN) - UK.....	12
3.3 The Human Safety Network (THSN) – Germany	14
4. Conclusion	16



1. Introduction

1.1 The fourth working paper of our Community of Practice “Coaching and Mentoring”

Within the methodological framework of Etienne Wenger’s “Community of Practice” (CoP) the European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network (EMEN) is organised along three key issues: coaching and mentoring, access to finance and diversity management. This working paper on “good practices and innovation on coaching and mentoring for migrants” (deliverable defined under 2.4 in the project proposal) represents Social Impact’s fourth analytic report on matters concerning the support ecosystem for migrant entrepreneurs in Europe. All intellectual outputs of our network are accessible on the project webpage, under <http://emen-project.eu/library/>.

The report builds on the following hitherto publications:

- Our working definition related to “coaching and mentoring” is laid out in the project’s “Map of service providers in the EU” (under Deliverable 2.2).
- Our “working paper on needs of organisations that offer coaching and mentoring for migrants” (under Deliverable 2.3) provides a basis for some critical conclusions in this report; particularly as two good practices presented in this report, namely both the Start-Up Refugee and The Entrepreneurial Refuge Network (TERN), have been part of a qualitative research design that included representatives of six BSOs of the migrant entrepreneurship sector.

1.2 The rationale of comparing support schemes for Migrant Entrepreneurs

With this report we aim at identifying good practices and innovation related to coaching and mentoring services for migrant entrepreneurs. In the course of the EMEN project (i.e. through the exchange with experts and organisations that constitute the project’s three individual CoP networks) it became evident that instead of simply listing good practices, it might be more fruitful to discuss “how to look and compare support schemes”.

As presented in our preceding analysis, the “real world” pressures that shape any support scheme are naturally bound to local conditions that strongly vary from region to region. These differences may materialise in different institutional frameworks such as the accessibility to public or private funding streams, as well as the needs of migrant entrepreneurship networks. Thus, as with any good practice, it is unclear if and to what extent learnings can be transferred to other regions and their respective varying political frameworks. They most certainly need to be tailored to the new local reality.



The German IQ network provides a sophisticated framework that (among others) allows comparing migrant entrepreneur support schemes, as well as it provides a database of already implemented assessments. The “Good Practice International” consists of four categories that are the following. 1. **Transferability**: it is as flexible as possible with respect to other national contexts. 2. **Innovation**: the resonance to current labour market challenges with a new and creative idea. 3. **Sustainability**; in terms of its structure and its results and 4. **Efficiency**: Are expenses proportionate to the successes?

You will find further info under:

<https://www.netzwerk-iq.de/angebote/iq-good-practice> (in German only)

Nonetheless, the cases discussed in this paper are worthwhile studying as they bear valuable insights into the options policies and frameworks offer when utilised wisely. In addition, we can learn from them about smart ways to structure processes, incentive options and project designs which provide support for migrant entrepreneurs.

For the sake of comparability of cases and in the light of the diversity of the migrant entrepreneurial target group, we focus in this report on coaching and mentoring schemes that support refugee entrepreneurs.

First, we will, therefore, outline our analytical framework in chapter 2. Afterwards, a descriptive analysis of the three cases is presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 conducts an appraisal of the lessons learned.

The analytics and conclusions presented in this brief rely – as opposed to preceding papers - on desk research only. Thus, they showcase a selected snapshot of the state-of-the art debate and rests upon established frameworks, knowledge and paradigms.

2. A lean analytical lens for comparing

The last “working paper on needs of organisations that offer coaching and mentoring for migrants” (under Deliverable 2.3) focused on the needs and challenges of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) with a migrant-specific focus. These insights informed this brief’s framework of analysis, i.e. the categories, i.e. the technical notions used in this report, are mostly mentioned and explained in greater detail in Deliverable 2.3. In what follows, we will present the four essential categories of our analytical lens:

2.1 Knowledge transfer




The first analytic category – knowledge transfer – refers to “what” is delivered. This category can be divided into two groups: business and non-business-related skills and competences.



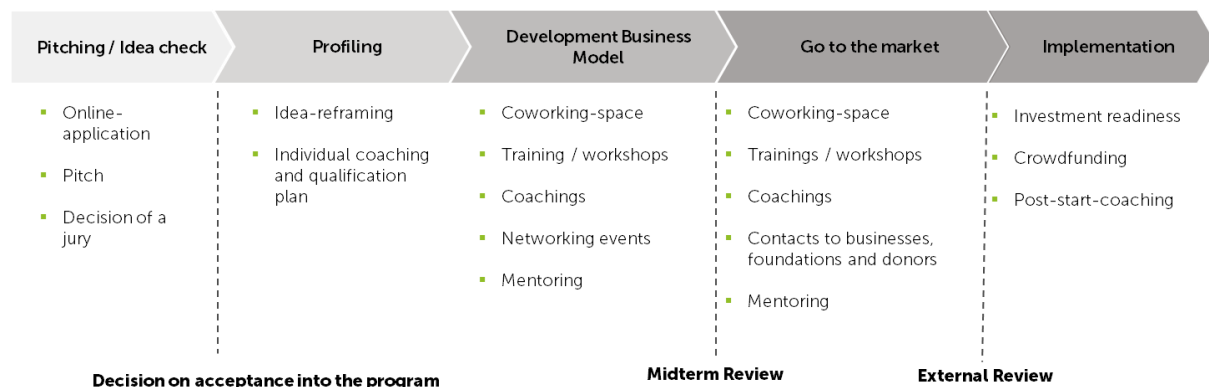
The former refers to coaching and/or mentoring schemes in which active business training (also encompassing legal advice and access to financing) is realised. Non-business-related skills and competences on the other hand address migrant-specific knowledge and resource gaps. For example, migrant entrepreneurs need access to a wider social network to get external support as well as the opportunity to finance their business idea. To address this need, migrants need knowledge of networking opportunities (such as local professional networks or fairs etc.) and if necessary, networking tools. Some migrant entrepreneurs need to enhance their language skills and/or struggle with cultural aspects in the business environment of the host country. Specifically tailored working sessions help address these experienced bottlenecks.

The previous empirical work, also including our extensive literature review, highlights the relative importance of certain knowledge and information or the lack thereof, i.e. lack of institutional, market and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, deficient language skills are a major barrier (see Deliverable 2.3 / under chapter 4.2.1. “Lack of knowledge”).

2.2. Support methodology

 Trainers, coaches and/or mentors¹ need to be methodologically guided in their support of migrant entrepreneurs. Therefore “support methodology” refers to “how” is the support structured, coordinated and delivered over time.

Tabell 1 : Example of a support methodology “Social Impact’s Incubation Blueprint”



On a broad perspective, one can differentiate between a first “profiling phase” in which the need as well as the strengths of individual migrant entrepreneurs are assessed. Hence, more tailor-made support can be implemented in the subsequent second “functioning phase”.

While the quality of support depends on many individual factors (of both coach and coachee), a thought-through framework, in which different internal and/or external support staff and stakeholders can be involved, is essential for the quality of the

¹ For the sake of the reduction of complexity we will not go into the technical definitions of training, coaching and mentoring. For this please refer to Chapter 2 “Coaching and Mentoring” of Deliverable 2.2 “Map of service providers in the EU and working paper on state of the art of coaching and mentoring schemes for migrant entrepreneurs”

support provided. Furthermore, in theory, this not only elevates quality standards (i.e. of programmes' scope and scale) but also leads to migrant entrepreneurs having more trust in the organisation supporting them.

In addition, we want to highlight two issues to be paid attention to when comparing support methodologies:

- As there is no „gold-standard“ (i.e. rigid structures or pre-defined schemes) for support methodologies, almost every aspect of the programmes can be adapted by the respective BSO. As such, the “clients” respectively the (private or public) financial partners' interests are frequently omitted or not sufficiently paid attention to. As shown as an example in table 1 and bearing in mind Social Impact's strong focus on collaborations with stakeholders from the private sector, Social Impact's “incubation blueprint” shows a general openness towards touch points with external stakeholders.
- Support schemes for migrant entrepreneurs can differ depending on the respective target group within this community. Some programmes target migrants from specific regions (EU-migrants or non-EU-migrants). Others address migrants with a residence permit (e.g. only recognised refugees). Furthermore, some programmes are not particularly migrant-specific, but bear a sensitivity towards the specific needs of the broader target group, i.e. migrant and/or refugees.

2.3 business / financing model

€ While an external perspective is often focusing on the outputs (i.e. the merits for the beneficiary) inflowing revenue streams are surely as important as they allow quality support of any BSO in the first place. Therefore, to establish sustainable support structures ascertaining mid- to long-term financial sustainability is key.

One can differentiate between short- and long-term financing through public funding (i.e. ESF or through regional/national funding authorities) or Cooperate Social Responsibility (CSR) cooperation's with larger enterprises or foundations². As a third potential income stream it is also not uncommon that BSOs co-fund a part of their operation by offering services, products or in-kind support. This includes renting out office space and/or offering coaching, workshops and seminars on multiple topics to migrant support programmes. Usually, such assistance funds only a share of an organisation's operation. It often fails, however, to cover overhead costs, which, in turn, are crucial to sustain the company's services and support activities. As a consequence, future funding programmes must include overhead expenses in their funding logic.

² In the framework of EMEN's third annual conference, Social Impact organised an online seminar together with Jan Noterdaeme, from CSR Europe, Prof. Nikolay Dentchev (Chair of CSR / University of Brussels) and Patrick Hoffmann (of Generali). For the seminar's results please see : <http://emen-project.eu/the-emen-projects-unlockingdiversity-series-comes-to-an-end-with-its-fourth-webinar-corporate-social-responsibility-support-in-times-of-crisis/>



Lastly – as briefly mentioned in the chapter “support methodology” – any collaboration may entail trade-offs with a BSO’s mission and vision. While donors are important for funding, they also condition their support to the programme’s alignment to their strategic goals. Particularly in the current heated public debates concerning migration at large, any third party involvement may expose a support schemes/BSO to moral judgement. While for good practice comparison this may be a salient category to take into consideration – as it is with any qualitative judgement – deep first-hand insights are required.

2.4 Embeddedness in the local ecosystem



Our last analytical category is touching upon the ecosystem perspective. Essential for the support of migrant entrepreneurs is the degree to which migrant-specific support organisations are embedded in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Both national and international expert networks³ as well as access to local and regional networks (i.e. private or public institutions and organisations, experts and other likeminded entrepreneurs) have many advantages for BSOs. Networks offer information and knowledge and thus cooperation can arise so that (particularly in the welfare-oriented BSO sector) common visions among players in the ecosystem can be tackled.

The importance of networks for BSOs is highlighted by our former research in various ways; and it is stated that organisations spend much resources to establish such networks. While networks certainly make a support scheme working, networks are neither visible (thus easy to assess in a good practice report) nor is its actual value for the quality of the migrant entrepreneurial support always measurable.

³ In the framework of EMEN’s CoP “Coaching & Mentoring”, Social impact organised a Webinar Series end of 2019. Among other on webinar was dedicated to the topic Networks for better Migrant Entrepreneurial Support: Do we need a European Ecosystem? with Norbert Kunz (Social Impact) and Guillem Aris (Auto Ocupacio). For accessing the video see : <https://youtu.be/fcl5xA6xzDA>

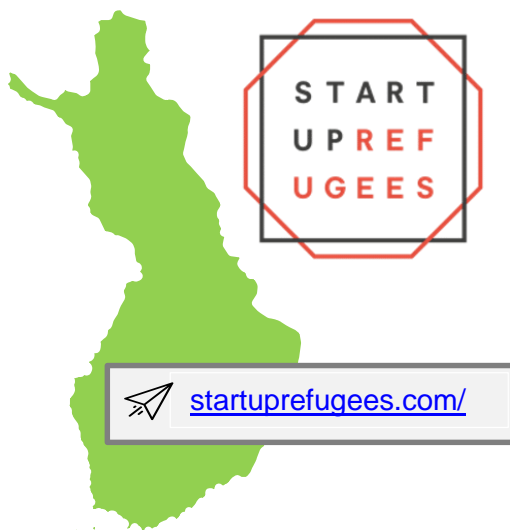


3. Good Practices for Refugee Start Up Support

In this chapter and in the light of our analytical categories above-described, we present best practice examples of business support programmes of three Business support schemes for refugee entrepreneurs. While we look at the content, which is delivered to the migrant entrepreneurs, the methodology that is deployed to coach migrant entrepreneurs, as well as how the programme is financed, we also aim to point out specific features – the programmes’ unique selling points (USPs).

For this we included three organisations with somewhat similar conditions (i.e. having refugees as a target group and being located in affluent European regions that are renown for welcoming refugees in the past). First, we will present “Start Up Refugee” from Finland, “The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network” (TERN) from UK and the German entrepreneurial branch of “The Human Safety Net” (THSN). In providing in-depth analysis, this good practice report offers a framework for how to examine and compare different migrant entrepreneurship support schemes.

3.1 Start-Up Refugees - Finland



Start-Up Refugees (SUR) is located in Helsinki, Finland. It offers an incubation programme for migrant entrepreneurs with or without prior experience. Their main operation is a mentoring programme which links migrant entrepreneurs to local businesses. As the name already indicates, Start-Up Refugee targets exclusively asylum seekers in Finland.

Founded in 2015, Start-Up Refugees can be also seen as a Finland-wide network which connects more than 500 companies, communities and individuals (particularly through their “service catalogue”, see

“methodology” section on this practice). In our good practice comparison SUR’s unique feature is its hybrid approach towards both start-up support for early refugee start-ups as well as acting as an employment agency.



Knowledge Transfer

Most remarkably the majority of the staff of the Finnish organisation are migrants themselves. This enables the company to communicate to their clients in 13 different languages (see Report Deliverable D.2.2). Members of the staff are, therefore, more aware of the day-to-day problems and challenges of migrant entrepreneurs.

Obviously, this is an advantage when it comes to designing support programmes as well as building a relationship with their clients in the first place.

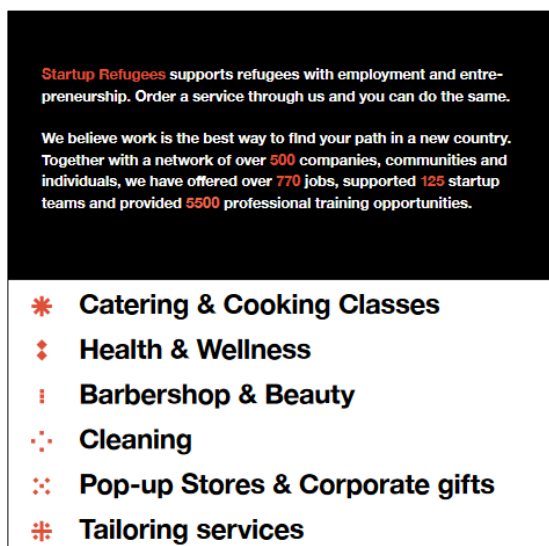
SUR concentrates exclusively on refugees with or without entrepreneurial experience. It aims to give them the opportunity to integrate more quickly and successfully into Finnish society. *Start-Up Refugees* relies on a voluntary network of universities and financial institutions as well as other experienced entrepreneurs and bigger (international) companies from the IT, commerce, design and service sectors. These partners conduct workshops and seminars and represent a valuable resource concerning economic growth for the participants as well as for the companies themselves.

Methodology

Start-Up Refugees concentrates on their mentoring programme. Thus, they offer access to a vast network of related firms and actors. The mediation of a refugee entrepreneur to a volunteer of their network precedes a profiling phase (see Report D.2.2). A main service they provide is the matching of refugees with local entrepreneurs and businesses.







This aid does not only serve the purpose of providing employment and, along with it, familiarity with the working environment, but it is also used for mentoring schemes. The entrepreneurs can take advantage of a large pool of information in a wide range of industrial sectors as well as the public sector. Start-up Refugees makes external entrepreneurial advice accessible to its participants. Its network consists of experts in marketing, leadership, financing, etc. Aspiring entrepreneurs can book sessions with these experts to access professional insight into the Finnish market and furthermore, get support in their entrepreneurial endeavour.

Picture 1 : Screen shot of Start-Up Refugees’ Service catalogue”



Startup Refugees supports refugees with employment and entrepreneurship. Order a service through us and you can do the same.

We believe work is the best way to find your path in a new country. Together with a network of over **500** companies, communities and individuals, we have offered over **770** jobs, supported **125** startup teams and provided **5500** professional training opportunities.

-  **Catering & Cooking Classes**
-  **Health & Wellness**
-  **Barbershop & Beauty**
-  **Cleaning**
-  **Pop-up Stores & Corporate gifts**
-  **Tailoring services**

SUR smartly connects its efforts of supporting Refugee Start-Ups with the mission of fostering the employability of asylum seekers in Finland at large.

As its core lies the “Service Catalogue” which “helps asylum seekers and migrants start new businesses in Finland”. SUR offers “support and [...] workshops in Finnish business culture, legal issues, network building, mentoring, market validation and seed funding, to mention a few”⁴

⁴ See: https://startuprefugees.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/web_StartupRefugees_Catalogue-1.pdf



€ Finance
Start-Up Refugee is predominantly financed through private funds from enterprises they cooperate with. This is mostly part of a CSR strategy of the cooperating enterprises. The organisation also stated that they are being financially supported by the municipal government of Helsinki.

Atom Embeddedness in entrepreneurial ecosystem
As one of the go-to organisations for the labour market integration in Finland, SUR cooperates with more than 500⁵ parties, including companies, government officials, NGOs, universities, congregations, research institutes, communities and individuals who support newcomers through starting businesses and entering the Finnish labour market. The organisation relies on a voluntary network of universities and financial institutions as well as other experienced entrepreneurs and (international) companies from the IT, commerce, design and service sectors.



3.2 The Entrepreneurial Refuge Network (TERN) - UK

The Entrepreneurial Refuge Network, founded in 2016, is one of the biggest agents supporting migrant entrepreneurs in the UK. They are concentrating on refugees and asylum seekers that want to start a business in the UK. They are providing advice, mentorship, networking and access to funding for UK refugee entrepreneurs.

One unique feature is their cooperation with the Ben & Jerry's brand, a major sponsor of this project. Through this cooperation TERN is able to part-time employ supported founders.

Lightbulb Knowledge Transfer
TERN offers coaching schemes as well as mentoring programmes through which the participants are trained in developing their business skills. This, again, precedes a process to assess the needs of clients. On this basis, migrant entrepreneurs are mediated to a mentor (see Deliverable 2.2).

A part of TERN is a programme called "ICE Academy". Participants go through a training in which they are provided with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills concerning new market (e.g. online), legal and institutional issues.

Another part of this academy's curriculum is the development and testing of their business idea. To give refugees a feeling of the economic and working culture and the opportunity to earn money, they have the possibility to work part-time as an ice-cream vendor for the Ben & Jerry's brand. This approach successfully mixes the

⁵ See: <https://startuprefugees.com/>

theoretical learning aspect of institutional and market knowledge with first-hand experience of the business culture in their new country.

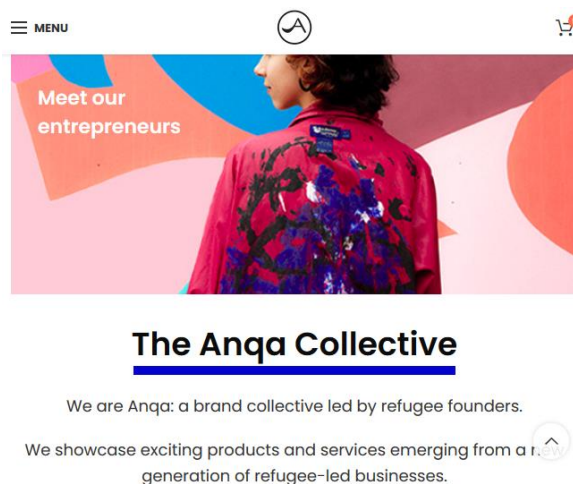
Methodology

TERN runs currently a support-intense three-stage incubation programme⁶. The programme allows for an incubation process over the course of up to one year of support. It is understood, that (besides the access to the programme) after stage one and two the business ideas are reviewed.

1. The early stage business support programme takes three months. It is a combination of part-time employment with early-stage business support focussed on testing and validating a business idea. On average, this stage provides 50 hours of workshops and support business mentoring throughout the programme, access to specific partnerships as well as partner workshops.
2. The consecutive six-month stage focusses on those ideas that are deemed viable for the market. In order to allow the start-ups to “go-to-market” access to a co-working space and to financial partners (both investors and to our customers) are at the core of support.
3. The last stage of two to three month is the “on-demand growth consultancy programme”. This more tailor-made support targets particularly those that succeeded with the initial entry to the market.”

Finance

TERN has a mixed business model: 50% of their revenue comes from private sector collaborations, 25% of EU projects and 25% of private donations. (see deliverable D.2.3).



Picture 2 : Screen-shot of TERN’s online market place “The Anqa Collective”

In mid-2020, The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network also founded the online market place “The Anqa Collective”⁷ on which products of and information about the entrepreneurs that went through TERN’s support scheme. While in its early stage the revenue stream of this market-place might have amounted to only a small share of TERN’s overall budget, it displays the entrepreneurial spirit of TERN itself. In addition, it also stands for a strong cooperative approach TERN’s vis-à-vis their alumni-start-ups.

⁶ See Interview with Charles Fraser (co-founder of TERN): <https://www.envestors.co.uk/tern/>

⁷ See: <https://www.anqacollective.org/>



Embeddedness in entrepreneurial ecosystem

There are many BSOs in London the company has established close ties with. Yet, there is no mentioning of any cooperation with public institutions. TERN is part of other EU-wide entrepreneurial networks such as MAGNET (Migrant Acceleration for Growth -Network for Entrepreneurship Training).



3.3 The Human Safety Network (THSN) – Germany

The Human Safety Net is a CSR-programme of the international Insurance Company Generali; like this THSN touches-upon many topic and societal challenges. One of its main pillar however, is the “programme for the support of refugee entrepreneurs” which is in Germany implemented by Social Impact. While not included in this good-practice report, it is important to note that in parallel THSN supports refugee entrepreneurs in cooperation with the BSO Singa France.

Social Impact was among the first partners of the foundation and started THSN for Refugees Start up in Munich at the end of 2017. The programme targets potential beneficiaries that are under of “international protection” (i.e. having asylum seeker status). By mid-July 2020, Social Impact successfully supported 93 THSN - start-ups in many locations throughout Germany.

While output numbers are somewhat difficult to compare the special feature of the THSN’s entrepreneurial branch is to be seen in the envisaged high-outputs of the programme over the next two decades (with an overall foreseen budget of € 20 million.). Thus, in order to scale the coaching activities, it envisaged to offer blended services (online & offline) in order to reach participants remotely who are not located in one of the big cities in the near future.

Knowledge Transfer

Participants of the programme are exposed to a wide range of knowledge. They receive support starting at the idea creation stage. The programme also offers support concerning legal issues in the founding process of an enterprise; which is due to legal reasons a particularity in Germany. Through coaching, workshops and/or seminars migrant entrepreneurs improve their business skills as well as their institutional and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, there are network possibilities which elevate their social resources and knowledge of the market. Both Generali and Social Impact provide here exposure to their broader network, respectively linkages with their other Social- and inclusive entrepreneurial Programmes.

Methodology

Given the heterogeneity of the participants, as one of the learnings of the early phase of the programme, Social Impact deems one-to-one coaching to be more effective than classroom training. However, specific workshops are organised for topics in high demand (e.g. legal forms, regulations in gastronomy etc.).

Prior to the programme start Social Impact selects projects that fill the eligibility requirements: being under international protection, commit to attend the trainings (at least orientation trainings at the beginning), have a certain level of English/German, have a concrete business idea. The support framework of the THSN is described as “a selective, stage-linked approach” that is “organized into a four-phase “funnel” approach”⁸

- “Profiling” (1a): In this early stage the early stage business idea participants are exposed to concepts of entrepreneurship (orientation), as well as their early stage business ideas ideated.
- “Fundamentals” (1b): Furthermore, participants are provided with individual coaching as well as matching and placement of mentors carried out.
- “Validation and Advanced Training” (2): This phase is particularly about strengthening essential competences that are core the business idea. market testing
- “Take Off Incubation” (3): While in phase the general coaching and mentoring continues, “Access to finance” is at its core. Here THSN works together KIZ-Sinnova⁹ in the context of its “Beehive-fund”.

In addition, all participants that could not successfully create their business are counselled by Social Impact in order to find the right support and partners in their network that support them in searching for a job that makes sense.

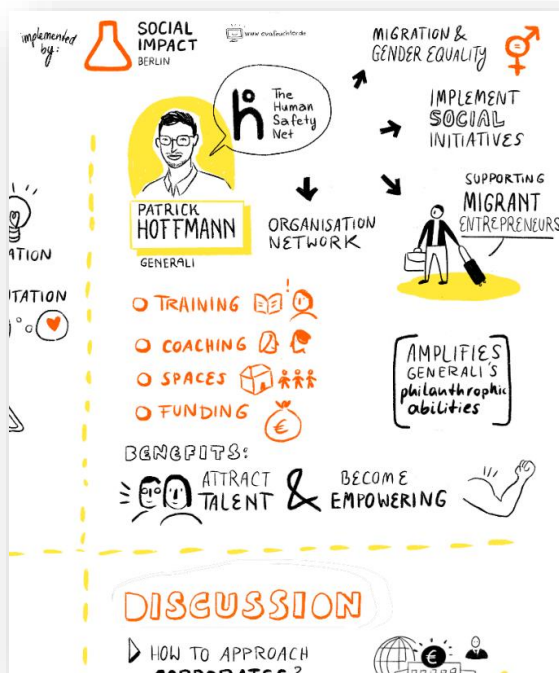
Finance

The Human Safety Net Foundation is a registered charity. The 100% of the grant budget, as well as any donations received, is spent on the programmes. It operates through a mixed funding model: Total investment is made up of funding from The Human Safety Net Foundation and from Generali business units.

⁸ See: <https://www.thehumansafetynet.org/programs/for-refugee/Germany-For-Refugee-Start-Ups>

⁹ For further information, please refer to EMEN’s Webinar on the topic «Access to Finance: Let migrants do it themselves »; see: <https://emen-project.eu/the-emen-first-webinar-is-coming/>





Picture 3 : Documentation of EMEN's online workshop, showcasing THSN (represented by Patrick Hoffmann / Generali).

Embeddedness in entrepreneurial ecosystem

The programme has a good network to public institutions of the municipal government in Munich, where the bulk of support activities take place. This allows strong cooperation when it comes to legal and administrative questions. Besides, Social Impact has been involved in shaping the start-up culture in Munich since 2017. The company, therefore, regularly hosts networking and learning event, that connects THSN participants with the broader (social innovation) network.

On a broader perspective the fact that THSN is at the core of Generali's CSR effort, might also allow the "programme for the support of refugee entrepreneurs" and their beneficiaries access to Generali's broader business

networks¹⁰. The overall scope of the THSN network alone is impressive as they cooperate with 13 NGOs helping refugee entrepreneurs in 4 countries (France, Italy, Germany and Switzerland) and 14 cities.

4. Conclusion

With this report we aimed to do both: Provide an analytical framework as well as to present support schemes that represent good practices in their own right. To conclude this report, we comment on both angles of this working paper.

We aimed at providing an analytical access points for comparing good practices. We did that by proposing a framework of four essential categories and eventually also compare features of different support schemes for migrant entrepreneurs. In order to derive a qualitative judgment of the very complex and ever evolving support schemes one need an insight view that exceeds the scope and resources of this report.

However, the strength of this working paper lies in the description of outstanding features, such as incentives that seem to be important in comparison to other programmes. Thus, while being aware of the limits of showcasing the above-

¹⁰ For further information, see: <http://emen-project.eu/the-emen-projects-unlockingdiversity-series-comes-to-an-end-with-its-fourth-webinar-corporate-social-responsibility-support-in-times-of-crisis/>

mentioned good practices, we believe this provides for a valuable learning field as well as inspiration.

Similarly, this paper provided an analysis of three different business support schemes across Europe, namely TERN (UK), Start-Up Refugee (Finland) and THSN (Germany). The analysis focused on refugee entrepreneurship, which might not be so different from other ME Support schemes. However, considering the founding stories of the three practices as well as their embeddedness in their relative conducive economic and political context allows a meaningful comparison¹¹. Each of the cases bears obvious advantages, e.g. idiosyncratic innovations and practices each programme realises.

In a nutshell: Start-Up Refugees is coming from and building on the broader refugee community in Finland. Thus, start-up support is - besides acting as an employment agency - merely one component of their approach. TERN from London has the strongest business approach among the three cases. Consequently, the organisation runs a rather market-oriented incubation programme. Like SUR, they strongly build their community and create strong linkages with i.e. their alumni network, which clearly bears advantages. THSN's case is surely outstanding in terms of its scope and scale. Due to the exchange between a strong sponsor and its embeddedness in the existing network of Social Impact Labs across Germany, THSN has significant leverage. Methodologically, also considering the focus of the broader THSN-programme, it seems not only to focus on supporting strong entrepreneurs, but also on providing orientation and inspiration to clients that have a lower disposition to establish their business.

¹¹ This however should not neglect the strong differences between conditions for supporting migrant/refugee entrepreneurs in different European regions. Aspects such as the public discourse vis-à-vis refugees and the herewith connected legal and policy frameworks certainly differ strongly between Germany, Finland and the UK. i.e. see chapter 2.1 "Policy Framework" (Deliverable 2.3)

